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FOVIP-Baker - 628  
Correspondence

November 4, 1991

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am sending this communication in light of your decision to visit China next week. I fully agree with your statement that there are "very real" problems to discuss with the Chinese leadership. Tibet definitely is one of those very real problems.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has always stressed the importance of human relationship based on personal contacts even in international politics. I am thus welcoming your decision in the hope that this visit will bring about a positive effect on the Chinese leaders. The visit also has the potential of sending the wrong signals to both the Chinese leaders as well as to the world unless the United States Administration is prepared to take a firm and principled stand on various issues including Tibet.

We are happy to see that the Administration has spoken positively of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Yale statement through the State Department briefing given by Ms. Margaret Tutwiler on October 10, 1991. During your upcoming visit to Beijing, I urge you to use your good office to persuade the Chinese leadership to accept the latest initiative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama without preconditions. Above all, the Chinese government must be urged to respect the wishes of the six million Tibetan people to decide their own destiny and bring an end to the illegal occupation of Tibet.

In my letter of October 8th I brought to your attention the details of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Yale statement. His Holiness' latest initiative is to reaffirm his commitment to non-violence and to create a new atmosphere to engage the Chinese authorities into negotiations for peaceful resolution of the Tibetan question. Through his proposed visit to Tibet, he hopes to persuade his people "not to abandon non-violence as the appropriate form of struggle" and also try to make the Chinese

leadership aware of the true feelings of the people of Tibet by inviting senior Chinese leaders to accompany him during this visit.

While welcoming your Administration's positive support for dialogue between the Tibetan and the Chinese, we see no reasons for the Administration, in the same statement given by Ms. Tutwiler to repeat that the United States policy recognizes "Tibet as part of China." Several months back, I had the opportunity to strongly convey our position to Ambassador Stapleton Roy and to other senior officials of your Administration on this issue. We believe such statements are unnecessary and inconsistent with your support for a dialogue between the Tibetan and Chinese. As you know, publicly stating that territory which has been invaded and occupied unconditionally belongs to the occupiers, will undermine positive steps towards a lasting and peaceful solution. It further jeopardizes and weakens our position in the event of direct negotiations. Such a stand also confronts the worldwide trend which made it possible for many occupied and enslaved nations and peoples to regain their freedom and independence in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and very recently in the Baltics. Furthermore, in my opinion, it also contradicts the Administration's policies. I am, therefore, hopeful that the U. S. Administration will avoid using different yardsticks to measure fundamental aspirations in different regions and of peoples.

The United States Congress has recognized the central issue of Tibet by declaring that it is an "occupied country" whose "true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-exile" in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act-Fiscal Years 1992-1993 which President Bush signed into law on October 28th. For six million Tibetans, this is encouraging. It is, therefore, vital for the present Chinese leadership in Beijing to understand that the overwhelming support for Tibet expressed by the United States Congress will have important bearing on the formulation of the Administration's Asia policy.

Let me also bring to your attention some of the recent Tibet-related events. The 43rd session of the Sub Commission of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights has adopted a resolution condemning China as "threaten [ing] the distinct cultural, religious and national identity of the Tibetan people." The first international human rights delegations which visited some regions of Tibet on behalf of the Australian government and the European Parliament have described the country as under "an excessive degree of authoritarian rule." The Polish Parliamentary delegation during a recent visit to Beijing compared Chinese policies in Tibet to that of France during the Algerian war of independence. Amnesty International has just released another report detailing egregious human rights violations.

The question of Tibet is not a human rights problem alone. We believe the holocaust which our people continue to face is the direct consequence of our country being forcibly occupied by our eastern neighbor. Therefore, the collective, demographic and national rights of our people must be addressed. The fact that the Chinese State Council wants to determine the next reincarnation of the Panchen Rinpoche (Lama) shows the extent to which Chinese designs undermine our rich national identity and heritage.

A strong and positive stand by the United States is called for, and I strongly urge you to raise Tibet as a priority in your Beijing agenda.

As I write to you, the situation in Tibet continues to deteriorate. Recent reports from Lhasa indicate growing resentment by Tibetans to increasing military rule of the region. Daily arrests and other human rights abuses continue unchecked despite repeated calls by your Administration and other governments for improved conditions.

In conclusion, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate you on your tireless efforts to bring about peace and stability in the Middle East. We know there are still many obstacles that must be overcome before lasting peace is achieved in the region. The fact that the Israelis and the Palestinians met for the first time is itself a major breakthrough. We are confident that further dialogues will contribute to comprehensive solution in the near future under your negotiating efforts and guidance.

Our prayers and best wishes are with you.

Sincerely,

Lodi G. Gyari  
Special Envoy  
of H. H. the Dalai Lama